

City of Middletown

Computer Use Policy

Revised: March 26, 2001

Introduction

It is the responsibility of the Computer Department to maintain and support the City's computers and communication systems. In order to effectively perform this function, and to safeguard against unauthorized access, it is essential that all equipment and systems are used in accordance with the following policy.

Use of Computers

The City recognizes the need for computers and communications systems and the vital role they play in assisting City employees in delivering services to the public. These systems, including all information and communications, are the property of the City of Middletown. The purpose of computers and communications systems is for City business. All other uses, including but not limited to the following are prohibited:

1. City computers and communications systems are provided for City business use only. Personal use of these systems during working hours is prohibited.
2. Violating any federal or state law (including all copyright laws) is prohibited.
3. Vandalizing any hardware, software, computer or communications systems is prohibited. Vandalizing of systems can result in a demand for restitution of damages caused. Intentionally introducing any computer viruses into the system is prohibited.
4. The City systems shall not be used for political purposes.
5. The City systems shall not be used for collective bargaining purposes, other than by the Personnel Department, Legal Department, Mayor's Office or Union officials.
6. The City systems shall not be used for fundraising activities unless approved by the Mayor's Office.
7. The City systems shall not be used for engaging in commercial activity, i.e. conducting a private business.
8. Games and all such software that has no productive business use is prohibited from City computers and networks.
9. No privately owned computers, laptops or peripherals will be added to the City systems or connect to City networks without prior authorization of the Computer Department.
10. Hacking or cracking is prohibited. This includes attempting to break into a City system for which the employee does not have proper authorization, or using City systems to attempt to break into an outside computer system. Testing the system's security shall be the sole responsibility of the Computer Department.
11. All City computers will be provided with anti-virus and system management software. Attempting to remove, disable or in any way circumvent this software is prohibited.

Security, User Accounts and Passwords

Access to all systems is controlled through the use of user accounts and passwords. Upon approval of the department head, an employee is issued an account which determines the information and services that the employee is authorized to access. All accounts are protected by passwords which are maintained by the users. Passwords should be set to something that is not obvious or easy to guess, should not be written down and should be changed regularly. Under no circumstances should an employee reveal account and password information to anyone else, unless ordered by a supervisor or superior officer. Under no circumstances should an employee attempt to use an account created for another employee or knowingly allow an account created for them to be used by another.

The majority of computer system security breaches come from within the organization rather than attacks from outside. It is vital to the security of the system that accounts and passwords are treated seriously. No amount of firewalls or encryption can protect a system from an attacker who possesses a valid username and password.

Standard Software

All PC's connected to the City networks must run Windows 95, Windows NT Workstation or Windows 2000 Professional. No other operating system is permitted. The standard office automation software (word-processing, spreadsheet, presentation, database) is Microsoft Office. Microsoft Outlook is the current e-mail client software. This also provides calendar, scheduling and contact management facilities. Microsoft Internet Explorer is used as the browser for Internet access. Attachmate KEA is the terminal emulation software that provides access to the ADMINS in-house developed applications. Some systems will include the Council Document Manager system. Systems will also contain anti-virus software and system management utilities. This comprises the standard software supported on City computers. This software will be installed, supported and maintained by Computer Department staff.

Non-standard Software

Any software other than that listed above is considered non-standard. This includes but is not limited to commercial software, proprietary systems, custom developed applications, shareware, freeware, screen savers and utilities. Due to the volume and diversity, and because this software is typically for a specific usage, it is not possible for the Computer Department to support non-standard software. The Computer Department may be able to offer some assistance with installation and support but the individual department must assume final responsibility. Where software is considered vital to the department's operation, it is strongly encouraged that the department maintain a support agreement with the software vendor. All non-standard software must be approved and registered with the Computer Department **prior** to installation or use.

Licensing

The City recognizes the responsibility to strictly adhere to all copyright laws and software licensing agreements. Under no circumstances is any software to be used in violation of these laws and agreements. The Computer Department will maintain a file for each computer

containing the licenses for all software in use on that computer. Licensing for standard software is purchased and maintained by the Computer Department. Licensing for non-standard software is purchased by the individual departments. When non-standard software is registered with the Computer Department, an **original** copy of the license must be provided for **each** computer that will run the software. For software not requiring licensing, a memo stating such, signed by the department head, will be submitted in lieu of a license.

Internet Access

Internet access will be provided to employees only upon the prior approval of the employee's department head and the mayor. As with general computer use, Internet access is provided for City business only. In addition to the guidelines outlined above under "Use of Computers", the following restrictions apply to Internet access.

1. Internet access will be configured on City computers by Computer Department staff only, and only after appropriate approval has been obtained. Attempting to gain access without approval is prohibited.
2. Internet access is approved on a per employee basis. It is prohibited for an approved employee to allow a non-approved employee to utilize their system to gain Internet access without the prior approval of the department head and the mayor.
3. Loading, use and accessing of personal Internet Service Provider accounts (AOL, SNET, etc.) is prohibited.
4. Access to sites that are not directly work related is prohibited.
5. Access to offensive sites is strictly prohibited. Specifically, any site that displays pornography, nudity, or any discriminatory content based on race, gender, religion, national origin or any other protected classification of persons shall not be accessed. The City employs software designed to limit access to such sites and can track each web that has been visited by individual computers. Attempting to circumvent this software is prohibited. Any employee who visits a such a site by accident shall forward the web site address to the Computer Department for blocking.
6. Downloading software, programs, and utilities from the Internet without prior approval of the Computer Department is prohibited.

Electronic Mail

Electronic mail, both internal (City-wide) and external (Internet e-mail) will be provided to employees only upon the prior approval of the employee's department head. As with general computer use and Internet access, electronic mail is provided for City business only. In addition to the guidelines outlined above under "Use of Computers" and "Internet Access", the following restrictions apply to electronic mail.

1. E-mail systems shall not be used for transmitting or receiving messages that violate the City's policies prohibiting sexual harassment or workplace violence. Receipt of any messages violating these policies shall be immediately reported by the recipient to his/her department head who in turn will report this to the Director of Human Relations and the Director of Personnel.

2. E-mail is approved on a per employee basis. It is prohibited for an employee to knowingly allow another employee to use their e-mail account or to attempt to use the e-mail account of another.
3. Loading, use and accessing of any personal Internet e-mail account (AOL, SNET, etc.) is prohibited.
4. Misrepresenting oneself in any communication or attempting to send any message anonymously is prohibited.
5. No confidential, attorney-client communication or information shall be communicated via e-mail. E-mail is subject to discovery and may be subject to the Freedom of Information Act. Confidential or sensitive information should more appropriately be communicated in written form or verbally.
6. Do not write anything about anyone that is inflammatory or defamatory. There should be no expectation of privacy with respect to the use of the computer. E-mail as with all information, is the property of the City.

Records Retention

Pursuant to the records retention laws in Connecticut, e-mail, documents, reports and other public records that need to be saved should be done so in a hard copy format in accordance with the approved records retention schedule as provided by the Secretary of State's Office. Records retention is the responsibility of individual departments. ***The Computer Department backs up computer source documents for disaster recovery only, not records retention.***

Disciplinary Action

Failure to comply with this policy will subject the employee to potential disciplinary action up to and including termination of one's employment. If the Computer Department detects a violation of this policy, the matter will be referred to the employee's immediate supervisor. Violators will be subject to punishment pursuant to Union contract and the City of Middletown Personnel rules, subject to the employee's and/or Union's rights to grieve such punishment.

Policy Acceptance

All employees who are granted access to the City computer and communications systems will be required to sign a Computer Use Agreement Form indicating that the employee has received a copy of this policy. This policy is subject to change at any time, with notice to employees. A current copy of this policy can be obtained from the Computer Department. A current copy will also be maintained on-line on the City's intranet at the following address:
city/it/policy.htm

Employee Signature

Date